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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY: Ivan Izenberg DATE: 12/23/81
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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6079

S E C R E T SAIGON 4786

EXDIS

SUBJECT: AMERICAN OBSERVERS TO VIET NAM

1. AT END SECOND FULL DAY IN VIET NAM OBSERVERS PRELIMINARY VIEWS WERE BEGINNING TO TAKE SHPAE.

2. IN GENERAL MOST OBSERVERS STATE THEY ARE WITHOLDING JUDGMENT UNTIL THEY SEE MORE AND UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS THEMSELVES. AT SAME TIME MANY HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY ARE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED SO FAR, APPARENTLY MORE FAVORABLY THAN THEY HAD EXPECTED TO BE.

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3. A NUMBER OF THE OBSERVERS SEEM TO HAVE HAD A SLIGHT OVERDOSE OF THE CRITICAL CORRESPONDENTS AND ARE REACTING NEGATIVELY TO IT. WHITNEY YOUNG TOLD SEVERAL CORRESPONDENTS AT AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION THAT HE CONSIDERS PRESS HAS BEEN VERY BIASED IN REPORTING ON CAMPAIGN AND ON ELECTION PREPARATIONS. YOUNG POINTED OUT THAT FROM THEIR REPORTING HE HAD NOT BEEN AWARE OF ALL THE CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY BY OPPOSITON CANDIDATES. HE HAD NOT REALIZED THE EXTENT OF THE VC PRESSURES AGAINST THE ELECTIONS AND THOUGHT THAT "I WOULD ONLY SEE THIEU/KY POSTERS EVERYWHERE."

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4. ELSOP, MURPHY AND MUNROE WERE AMONG OTHERS COMMENTING CRITICALLY ON ATTITUDE OF CORRESPONDENTS. DR. ELSON USED SUCH TERMS AS "RUDE", "CYNICAL" AND "ARROGANT" IN EXPRESSING HIS REACTION. SENATOR MURPHY FELT THAT BEHAVIOR OF A NUMBER OF THE CORRESPONDENTS WAS COMPLETELY OUT OF LINE. MUNROE FELT AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVEN
ERY INACCURATE PICUTRE VIETNAMESE
SITUATION DUE DISTORTED AND EXAGGERATED PRESS REPORTS.

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5. OBSERVERS YXVE CONTINUED ASSIDUOUS EFFORTS TO GET AS BROAD A PICTURE AS POSSIBLE OF ELECTION SCENE AND HAVE UNDERTAKEN NUMEROUS INTERVIEWS TO GET TO SOURCE OF CHARGES OF ELECTION RIGGING. GOVERNOR HUGHES HAD ONE HOUR INTERVIEW WITH TRAN VAN HUONG ON EVENING SEPT 1 (HE WAS FOLLOWED BY CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND MCCARTHY WHO ALSO HAD LONG INTERVIEW WITH HUONG.) SENATOR MUSKIE HAS SEEN AU TRUONG THANH, VO LONG TRIEU AND DZU. HE HAD ASKED FOR APPOINTMENT SEE BIG MINH'S EX-RUNNING MATE TRAN NGOC LIENG BUT DID NOT ACTUALLY MAKE IT ALTHOUGH APPOINTMENT WAS ARRANGED. HE ALSO HAS SEEN TON THAT THIEN OF SUSPENDED "GUARDIAN". STANFORD SMITH HAS ALSO SEEN THIEN AND THE EDITORS OF THOI DAI WHO HAS FREQUENTLY TAKEN LINE CRITICAL OF GVN. ONE OF BUSIEST OF THE GROUP IN INTERVIEWING OPPOSITON FIGURES HAS BEEN JOHN KNIGHT WHO HAS CONFINED HIS REACTIONS SO FAR TO SAYING THAT HE IS KEEPING AN OPEN MIND. PATTERSON HAS ALSO BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE IN HIS CONTACTS.

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6. THE REACTION OF THE OBSERVERS TO THEIR VARIOUS TRIPS TO THE PROVINCES HAS BEEN ALMOST UNIVERSALLY FAVORABLE. IT IS PARTICULARLY PLEASING THAT MANY HAVE COMMENTED WITH OBVIOUS SATISFACTION ON THE OPPORTUNITY THEY HAVE HAD TO MOVE ABOUT FREELY AND TO TALK WITH ANYONE THEY PLEASED. MAYOR MCKELDIN WHO HAS VISITED BOTH I CORPS AND SIAGON AREA HAS COMMENTED TO AN EMBOFF THAT HE HAS BEEN FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY COMPETENCE

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OF THE GVN OFFICIALS HE HAS MET AND AS A CONSEQUENCE HAS A SOMEWHAT MORE FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD OUR INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM. A SIMILAR REACTION WAS EXPRESSED BY GOVERNOR MCCALL WHO DEPARTED FROM HIS SCHEDULED ITINERARY TO VISIT PHAN RANG AS HE "HAD BEEN PRESSED BY OTHERS NOT TO GO TO PRE-ARRANGED PLACE." HE SAID HE AND HIS GROUP HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT THE VIETNAMESE WERE AT A HIGHER LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT IN ELECTIONS THAN HE HAD EXPECTED.

7. TODAY (SEPTEMBER 2) MAJORITY OF OBSERVERS ARE FOLLOWING GVN SCHEDULE WITH CALLS ON THIEU, KY AND SUU. (AMBASSADOR BUNKER OF COURSE PRESENT AT THESE CALLS.) IN ADDITION,

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SCHEDULE INCLUDED SCA BEFING, TOUR OF ELECTION PREPARATIONS IN SAIGON AND MILITARY BRIEFINGS. OBSERVERS HAVE MOVED IN AND OUT OF SCHEDULE AS DESIRED AND ALL SEEM GOING SMOOTHLY. THIS EVENING OBSERVERS ATTEND THIEU/KY RECEPTION AT INDEPENDENCE PALACE TO WHICH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES INVITED.

8. ON BASIS OF THEIR PRESENT PLANS FOR ELECTION DAY IT NOW APPEARS THAT NINE OBSERVERS WILL BE IN HUE, FIVE IN CAN THO, TWO (MURPHY AND GOY) IN TUY HOA, ONE (SCERRA) IN BAN ME THUOT, ONE (RUDIN) IN VUNG TAU AND FOUR IN SAIGON.

GP-3. BUNKER

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ACTION EA 19

INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,SP 02,
SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,L 03,H 02,SAL 01,P 04,INR 07,
AID 30,RSR 01,/119 W

Z R 032235Z SEP 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 6127
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4092
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2404
AMCONSUL DANANG 879

UNCLAS SAIGON 4865

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: VIET-NAM ELECTION RETURNS

REF: SAIGON 4825

1. AS OF 5:30 AM LOCAL TIME SPECIAL COMMISSARIAT FOR ADMINISTRATION HAD COMPILED UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FROM ELECTORAL JURISDICTIONS WHERE APPROXIMATELY 1,300,000 VOERS CAST THEIR BALLOTS ON SEPTEMBER 3. BASED ON UNOFFICIAL RETURNS FROM THESE CONSTITUENCIES THE STAN. OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATTES IS AS FOLLOWS:

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SLATE	NO. OF VOTES
SUU/DAN	120,368

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KY/CINH		104,238
BINH/KHINH	Y	46,348
DZU/CHIEU		267,350
HUONG/TRUYEN		114,608
CO/SINH		33,658
LY/DUONG		29,699
HIEP/TRUYEN		46,938
THIEU/KY		474,327
KHANH/DONG		40,912
QUAT/CHAN		74,520

2. FOREGOING FIGURES DO NOT INCLUDE RETURNS FROM SAIGON WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFICIALS ARE, HOWEVER, GIVING OUT FOLLOWING FIGURES EMPHASIZING THAT THEY ARE "UNOFFICIAL": 129,678 VOTES FOR HUONG; 126,456 VOTES FOR THIEU; AND 76,719 VOTES FOR DZU. BREAKDOWN FOR OTHER CANDIDATES NOT YET AVAILABLE.

3. MORNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPERS ARE REPORTING ELECTION RESULTS AS THIEU/KY VICTORY.
BUNKER

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